



# CanadaSpeaks 2015



## A National Public Opinion Poll on Health and Medical Research January, 2015

### Partners:

Association of Faculties  
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Health Charities  
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Research Canada

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Saskatchewan Health  
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## Key Findings

In this fifth national public opinion poll in the *CanadaSpeaks* series, Canadians continue to demonstrate their strong commitment to health research and health innovation in Canada despite the economic challenges our country faces in 2015.

In January 2015, Research Canada, in partnership with five national organizations and two provincial organizations, conducted a national public opinion poll on Canadians' views of health research, health care and health innovation.

The overall message of the poll was that, despite changes in our economy over the last decade, Canadians have not wavered in their commitment to the importance of supporting health and medical research because they recognize the benefits it can bring to our health and to our economy.

Canadians told us that research has a profound – and personal – impact on Canadians.

### Leadership and Priorities

- Canadians are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increased funding for health care and health and medical research.
- A very strong majority (90%) of Canadians say health research makes an important contribution

to health care while a strong majority (77%) say it makes an important contribution to the economy.

- Ninety-two percent of Canadians say basic research should be supported by the federal government — an increase from results in 2006 and 2009.
- A very strong majority of Canadians think it is important for both federal and provincial governments to invest in the education and training of health and medical researchers.

### Investment

- Four out of five Canadians agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research. Agreement is on par with results from 2009.
- A majority of Canadians (68%) are willing to pay \$1/week more in taxes if they know the revenue supports government investment in Canadian health innovation, on par with results in 2009.



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## Research Canada

### An Alliance for Health Discovery

Research Canada is a national, broad-based alliance dedicated to increasing investments in health research through collaborative advocacy. We believe health research is a shared benefit, shared responsibility and an investment in Canada's future. We engage government, academia, industry and nonprofit sectors to build support for balanced and long-term health research funding – investments that strengthen Canada's innovation system and lead to better health, sustainable health care, new commercialization opportunities, and skilled jobs for Canadians. Only through sustained and balanced investments in health research will Canada succeed in keeping its citizens the healthiest and most prosperous in the world.

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- A majority of Canadians (63%) say the government should allocate between 1 and 24 cents on the healthcare dollar towards health and medical research, slightly down from 2009 and 2006.

## Public and Private Health Information

Canadians prefer the internet to learn about advances in health research. Overall, health reports in the media had a widespread impact in the last five years. At least one behavioural change was made by eight out of ten Canadians because of a health report. A majority of Canadians have made a change to their consumption and almost half of Canadians have changed their physical activity due to a health report in the media.

- Health and Medical Researchers are highly trusted. Almost half of Canadians rank health and medical researchers 8 or higher on a 10-point scale.

- Three quarters of Canadians say they are willing to share personal health information as long as it is kept confidential.

## Public Engagement and Awareness of Health Research

- While a majority of Canadians say they are interested in participating in health and medical research – including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding – only 24% are aware of opportunities to do so.
- Further, only one-third of Canadians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in their province.

### About the survey:

CanadaSpeaks 2015, led by Research Canada, is a partnership of five national and two provincial organizations. It is the fifth in a series of similar polls conducted by Research Canada and its partners since 2006.

The 2015 online survey of more than 1,000 Canadians was conducted by Vision Critical. The margin of error is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. Specific regional and age subgroup data, where there is a significant variation of interest, were selected and reported by Vision Critical and included in the national poll document to provide more comparative data.